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**GOVERNOR DAVIS ANNOUNCES \$550,000  
FOR FOSTER YOUTH ACADEMIC MENTOR PROGRAM**

*Grant Funding to Raise Academic Achievement for Foster Care Youth*

**SACRAMENTO** - Governor Gray Davis announced today \$550,000 in grants to provide academic mentors to foster care youth in Sacramento County, Los Angeles County, Ventura County, Fresno County and Oakland City. The Governor's Academic Volunteer Mentor Service Program (AVMSP) awards grants to local education agencies ranging from \$25,000 to \$125,000, providing academic mentoring for students who need it most.

California's foster youth are often placed in temporary homes and schools for unspecified periods of time.

"High mobility and often unstable home environments make foster children some of the neediest children in California who will greatly benefit from the added support of a mentor," Governor Davis said.

The Governor's AVMSP foster care mentor programs are committed to providing foster youth with a stable adult role model who will support the youth academically and emotionally.

Governor Davis provided \$10 million in funding for the program in the current fiscal year. Since taking office, the Davis administration has provided a total of \$30 million for the program. Local school districts and community organizations have used these funds to serve nearly 300 schools and 20,000 students every year. The AVMSP, administered by the Governor's Office of the Secretary for Education, is the largest state-funded program focusing primarily on academic improvement. The program also helps raise educational aspirations and the promotion of healthy life styles by matching at-risk foster youth with adult mentors.

The grant recipients include:

- Fresno County Office of Education;
- Los Angeles Unified School District;
- Oakland Unified School District;
- Sacramento City Unified School District;
- Sacramento County Office of Education; and
- Ventura County Office of Education

For information about funding or becoming an academic mentor, please visit the AVMSP Web Site at <http://www.ose.ca.gov>. # # #